

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
81R2853 KEL-D

S.B. 847
By: Averitt
Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, community colleges are able to issue a fee for high-cost programs, such as a pilot training to Hinson-Hazlewood students. However, when that provision was written into the Texas Education Code, Texas technical colleges were not included.

S.B. 1528, 79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005, authored by Senator Zaffirini, chairwoman of the Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education, provided community colleges with the ability to issue a fee for high-cost programs.

Because of high-cost programs, such as the Texas State Technical College-Waco's (TSTC-Waco) aircraft pilot training (program), TSTC-Waco has been running at a major deficit that is expected to get larger while the number of Fort Hood soldiers returning home increases. As of September/October 2008, TSTC-Waco lost \$41,399.

Because word continues to spread about the low-cost or no-cost to Hinson-Hazlewood students in the program, the campus expects to see 100 Hinson-Hazlewood students by the fall semester of 2011. At this level, the campus would be taking in too much debt to continue to offer the program and would have to consider removing it from the curriculum.

As proposed, S.B. 847 authorizes a fee for extraordinary costs associated with a specific program or course and provides that exemptions for Hinson-Hazlewood students do not apply to this fee.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 54.203(g), Education Code, to authorize the governing board of a public junior college, public technical institute, or public state college, as those terms are defined by Section 61.003 (Definitions), rather than the governing board of a junior college district, to establish a fee for extraordinary costs associated with a specific course or program and to provide that the exemptions provided by Subsections (a) (relating to the exemption of veterans, dependents, et cetera who are exempt from paying certain dues, fees, and charges) and (b) (relating to relating to exemptions for children of members of the armed forces) do not apply to this fee.

SECTION 2. Provides that Section 54.203, Education Code, as amended by this Act, applies beginning with fees charged for the 2009 fall semester.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.